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My experience at SouthEast Alaska Regional Health Consortium (SEARHC) was an unforgettable one. Going from living in a place like Baltimore to living in a place like Sitka was an experience all on its own. Sitka is a tourist town in Southeast Alaska, that is home to only a little over 8,000 people. SEARHC is an organization funded by the Indian Health Service, which provides services to Alaska native people. They have many health departments in addition to the two hospitals that are located in Sitka and Juneau.



I spent the summer working in the Injury Prevention Department. I worked with very helpful and dedicated people who taught me many

things. My main assignment concentrated on intentional injuries. I was instructed to write a white paper examining the problem of domestic violence and child abuse in Southeast Alaska. Other duties that were assigned to me included teaching survival skills to children at Dog Point Fish Camp and Kake Culture Camp, working at a health fair in Hoonah, installing smoke detectors in Pelican and aiding in smoke detector and gun locker follow-ups in many of the SEARHC villages, conducting personal floatation device and bike helmet observational studies, and even helping to run the SEARHC Safety Shop.

There are many things that I enjoyed while working at SEARHC. First, I am grateful just for the fact that I was given the privilege of traveling and living in Alaska for the summer. I also loved being able to travel to some of the villages and get to know some of the people that the Indian Health Service serves. Another part of the job that I really enjoyed was going to the culture camps and learning along with the children about some of the traditions that are important in their culture. I also enjoyed being given the ability to teach the children about how to keep themselves safe.

There were some things that I did not necessarily enjoy about my summer work. Seeing the alarming numbers of domestic violence, child abuse, alcohol abuse, and suicide was very disturbing. Also, seeing the way that some of the people live was difficult for me.



My summer in Alaska was a learning experience that I will never regret. I learned many valuable lessons and I saw what the Indian Health Service could do for my career. I hope to someday be a part of it.